

Kentucky Family Matters



News & Information About Kentucky Family Court

Winter 2004

2004 General Assembly Watch

By Kelly Stephens, J.D.
Family Court Specialist

The 2004 Kentucky General Assembly convened Jan. 6 and the Department of Family Court is monitoring legislation that may affect families and children in the Commonwealth.

The following list highlights several proposed bills that had been prefiled at the time of publication. This is not an all-inclusive list of bills that may affect Family Court and all provisions of bills have not been set forth. Visit www.lrc.state.ky.us for an up-to-date version of all legislative filings.

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Children and Child Support

Several proposals regarding child support have been filed. One proposal is BR 349,* an update of the child support guidelines table.

Another bill, BR 350, would establish conditions for adjusting presumptive child support awards on the basis of shared parenting orders. Under the bill, a shared parenting order would grant each parent physical custody of a child for more than 109 days of parenting time per year. The adjustment to child support for shared parenting would be subject to five written findings by the sitting judge regarding the financial condition of the parties and the best interests of the child.

BR 318 would create new sections of KRS Chapter 403 to replace Kentucky's Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction Act with the Uniform Child Custody and Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act drafted by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws.

Another bill, HB 93, BR 476, proposes to repeal, amend and re-enact KRS 615.010 to replace the existing interstate compact relating to juveniles with the Interstate Compact for Juveniles.

BR 452 would create a new section of KRS Chapter 199 to permit the Cabinet for Families and Children to establish a pilot program to provide residential services for sibling groups committed to the cabinet.

Domestic Violence

BR 354 proposes to allow county attorneys to represent domestic violence petitioners. If enacted, a county attorney would be permitted to assist a domestic violence victim in preparing, filing, prosecuting, modifying and enforcing a petition pursuant to KRS 403.715, in the county in which the county attorney holds office.



HCR 16, BR 60 urges the Legislative Research Commission to join the Executive Branch and the statewide constitutional officers in adopting for their employees former Gov. Patton's Model Policy for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in the public workplace.

Domestic Relations

In domestic relations cases, where disclosure of a Social Security number is required, BR 372 would require that the disclosure not be made in the public record of the case, but in a separate form to be stored in a separate, secure area.

* BR means bill referral. Bills will be assigned a new number after the session begins.

2004 brings a vision to dream big



From the Desk of the Family Court Manager

By Carla Kreitman, J.D.
Department of Family Court

New year looming! This seems an appropriate time to reflect on the last year, with the holidays behind and a brand new year ahead. I am especially proud we met the challenges of 2003 and I look forward to bright hopes for 2004.

Ellen Goodman wrote, "I have never been especially impressed by the heroics of people convinced they are about to change the world. I am more awed by ... those who

... struggle to make one small difference after another." My experiences in the court system continue to introduce me to both types of people, individuals with the vision to dream big and "light giant fires," and those dedicated to making a small difference — carrying forward those "little candles of light." I am impressed by both and grateful for how our court system continues to address the tough questions necessary for constant improvement.

Last year, along with new site implementation, we explored new ways to improve the judicial system's responsiveness to the unique concerns of families. Kentucky Family Court sites, along with Family Courts nationwide, were busier than ever as already significant caseloads continued to grow.

The Department of Family Court congratulates our Family Court sites on the progress they have made and looks forward to great things in 2004. Have a safe and wonderful winter.

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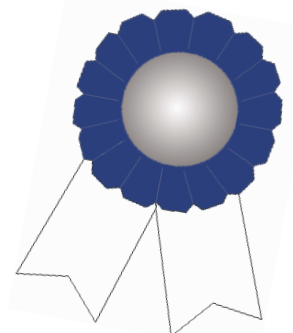
Kentucky Family Matters is published quarterly by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) as a forum for the exchange of ideas and information relevant to Kentucky Family Court. The viewpoints expressed in the articles submitted do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the AOC. The Department of Family Court does not guarantee the accuracy of the information contained in submitted articles and is not responsible for any errors, omissions or results obtained from use of the information.

Judge Frazier receives Kentucky White Ribbon

Family Court Judge Stephen Frazier, who serves Johnson, Lawrence and Martin counties, was honored by the FIVCO Area Development District in association with the Kentucky Domestic Violence Association and the Governor's Office on Domestic Violence for his work in curbing domestic violence in Lawrence County.

Judge Frazier received the Kentucky White Ribbon, an award given each year to a man who is working to help end domestic violence against women in the FIVCO area. He was hailed for his innovative work with domestic violence victims, including his assembly of a team of community professionals to assist him in Family Court.

Excerpted from The Independent, Oct. 22, 2003.



Family Court administrators meet and share ideas

The Department of Family Court hosted a two-day Court Administrators Conference in October in an effort to keep Family Court staff apprised of issues affecting the justice system. Almost all Family Court administrators were able to attend the meeting, which was held in Frankfort at the Administrative Office of the Courts.

Several AOC personnel spoke on topics pertinent to Family Court, including media relations, computer training, juvenile forms and interpreter services. The conference also provided the opportunity for feedback and communication between the court administrators and department staff.

Statewide staff meetings are valuable for both participants and Department of Family Court personnel. Meeting face-to-face provides unique benefits not available through contact by e-mail or phone. Due to the fantastic response, statewide meetings for other groups — support workers, law clerks and staff attorneys, and secretaries — are in the works. Thanks again to all of the presenters and participants!



Family Court administrators gathered in Frankfort in October for an educational meeting. Left to right, front row: Donna Barney, Jim Bailey, Nita Pursley and Dovie Damron. Second row: Missy Alsip, Shelly Anderson, Jim Birmingham, Cammi McGlone, Claudia Brewer and Linda Grim. Third row: Lisa Rogers, Carla Kreitman, Micah Sherfey, Nancy Hulett, Robin Turpen and Joan Bosaw. Fourth row: Philip Mobley, Dana Carter and Rebecca Brown.

Cambron honored for work with Citizens Review Panel

*By Jim Birmingham
Jefferson County Court Administrator*

Mary Lou Cambron, Family Court support worker, was recognized as the 2003 Member of the Year for her work with the Jefferson County Citizens Review Panel. Ms. Cambron was honored by the Kentucky Citizens Review Panels at the appreciation dinner in Midway, Ky. This is the second time in three years she has received this award.

Ms. Cambron currently chairs the Jefferson County

Citizens Review Panel, one of three such panels that were implemented in Kentucky as part of the Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act. The review panel is designed to bring together concerned citizens to evaluate the activities of the Kentucky Cabinet for Families and Children by examining its policies and procedures, its adoption and foster care systems, and its cooperation with others in the community to better the circumstances of the children and families in the community.

Congratulations to Ms. Cambron!

Brown speaks to Henderson Advisory Council

*By Robin Turpen
Henderson County Court Administrator*

The Henderson County Family Court Advisory Council celebrated Family Court Month by inviting Joe Brown, Ph.D., to address the council and share with the community the importance of the Families in Transition (FIT) educational program. FIT is designed to assist divorcing families with their children's adjustment.

Dr. Brown, who serves as state director for FIT, explained how the nationally acclaimed program addresses

needs of adolescent and young children suffering from the "fallout" of their parents' divorce.

Following the presentation, Dr. Brown conducted a training class for 11 new Henderson County FIT facilitators. He also gave an interview for a health segment to be aired on the local TV station. Dr. Brown's presentation about the needs of our children will have a lasting effect by helping our families become stronger and healthier.

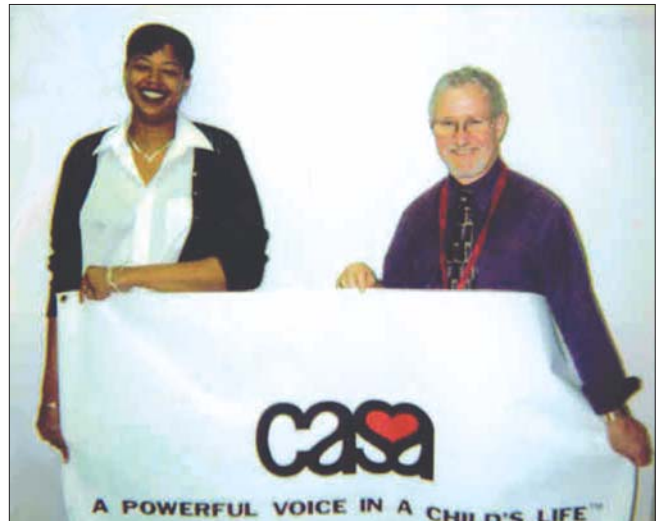
CASA moves to Franklin Family Court

*By Nancy Hulett
AOC Family Court Specialist*

Franklin County Family Court welcomes Franklin County CASA. Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), a nonprofit organization, has been in Frankfort since the fall of 1999. To date, Franklin County CASA has trained more than 20 volunteers who have advocated for more than 120 children who are in Family Court because of abuse or neglect.

On June 1, 2003, the agency moved into the Franklin County Family Court building at 321 W. Main St., Frankfort. Because the CASA staff and volunteers spend a significant amount of their time in the Family Court building, this move enables them to work more closely with the court and enhances their ability to assist the children in Family Court. Franklin County Family Court Judge Reed Rhorer was instrumental in accomplishing this move.

CASA staff are grateful to Franklin County Fiscal Court for donating this space and to the Administrative Office of the Courts for facilitating the move. CASA Executive Director Rendell Butler and Candace Scott, administrative



Rendell Butler, executive director for CASA, and Candace Scott, administrative secretary, display the CASA banner.

secretary, invite you to visit their new office. You may contact them at 502-875-0702 or franklincasa@dcr.net.

Warren Family Court welcomes new staff

*By Maggie Pearson
Warren County Court Administrator*

Warren County Family Court welcomes Brian "Slim" Nash as the case specialist and Kristy Vick as the staff attorney.

Slim Nash

Slim graduated from Western Kentucky University in May 1993 with a major in sociology and a minor in criminology. Slim previously held a position as juvenile services coordinator for Warren County Fiscal Court, where he worked with Warren Circuit and District courts to encourage interagency cooperation and collaboration in an effort to lower the occurrence of juvenile crime and delinquency in Warren County. Slim is a native of Terre Haute, Ind., but has resided in Bowling Green since 1988. He and his wife, Staci, have two children, Will and Presley.

Kristy Vick

Kristy received her law degree from the University of Louisville School of Law. She graduated from Western Kentucky University in May 2000 with a major in consumer family sciences and a minor in family studies. Kristy served as a university Ambassador, better known as

a "Spirit Master," for WKU and was president of the Phi Upsilon Omicron Honor Society. She is a native of Russellville, Ky.

Circuit and Family Court Judges Hold This Date!



Judicial Conference on Child Protection

March 7-10, 2004 • Lexington, Ky.

Look for more information soon.

Pike Family Court holds old-fashioned Christmas celebration for foster families

*By Raquel Anderson
Pike County Court Administrator*

The holidays are a busy time for Pike County Family Court, the Tree of Promise and the Big Sandy Foster/Adopt Association. This year the three organizations carried out the Third Annual Foster Family Old-Fashioned Christmas Celebration for the foster children of the Big Sandy Region.

The Big Sandy Foster/Adopt Association is a nonprofit organization that accepts donations from local businesses, organizations and individuals to host this special event.

Last year the community donated money, blankets, clothes, toys, door prizes, canned goods and even turkeys! Several local attorneys “adopted” a child and bought a gift or gifts from the wish list that the child provided to Santa’s elves.

The Pike County Performing Arts group performed its Christmas show for the children. The children sang along with the music and enjoyed the dance performance.



Generous members of the community made sure there were plenty of toys for Santa to give to the foster children.



Pike County Family Court Judge Larry Thompson shakes Santa's hand while the elves look on.

After Judge Thompson read “The Night Before Christmas” to the children, everyone heard bells jingling. Then all of a sudden, with a big HO! HO! HO!, Santa Claus and his elves appeared. As the 251 children gathered around him, Santa Claus (our support worker’s husband) and the elves gave out gifts. Every child received a gift, sat on Santa’s knee and got his or her picture taken. It was truly a wonderful moment for everyone to see the glow in these children’s eyes.

There were games for the children to play, food for them to enjoy, and clothes, notebooks, school supplies, coloring books, crayons and small toys for them to take home. Each foster family received a food basket with a turkey, a blanket and a door prize.

This year Santa’s elves are already busy so foster children can have yet another wonderful Christmas in 2004!

Kentucky Family Matters available on the Web, by e-mail

Kentucky Family Matters can be viewed on the Court of Justice Web site at www.kycourts.net by clicking on Administrative Office of the Courts, Family Court and Newsletters. In addition, we would like to begin offering *Kentucky Family Matters* by e-mail. If you would like to receive the newsletter by e-mail, please send your e-mail address to: brendab@mail.aoc.state.ky.us.

Judge Cynthia Sanderson presides over Teen Court

McCracken County Family Court Judge Cynthia Sanderson swore in 90 Paducah teenagers as officers of McCracken County Teen Court, one of the largest such programs in the state. Teen Court proactively involves students in the judicial system by allowing teenagers to act as attorneys, jurors, clerks and bailiffs of a court that will hear actual cases of fellow teens.

The Teen Court participants are students from the Community Christian Academy and St. Mary, Reidland, Lone Oak, Heath and Paducah Tilghman high schools.

Students prepare to hear real cases by conducting mock trials. Teen Court teaches the participants the roles of clerk, bailiff, and prosecution



and defense attorneys under the guidance of Teen Court coordinators and the supervision of Judge Sanderson.

Teen Court hears cases involving teenagers who have pled guilty to minor nonviolent offenses such as traffic violations, drug violations, shoplifting, truancy, harassment,

being beyond parental control, and possessing or buying alcohol.

Sentences issued by Teen Court are binding in Kentucky's court system, with potential punishments ranging from written apologies to community service and restitution.

Potential sentences also include participation in Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous.

McCracken County Teen Court began hearing cases in November 2003, holding court on Monday evenings. The Teen Court dockets contain anywhere from five to 20 cases per evening.

Excerpted from The Paducah Sun, Oct. 28, 2003.

Nancy Hulett joins Department of Family Court

Nancy Hulett joined the Department of Family Court in November as a Family Court specialist for the Administrative Offices of the Courts in Frankfort. For the last three and a half years, Nancy served as the court administrator for Franklin County Family Court Judge Reed Rhorer.

Nancy lives in Frankfort with her husband, Joe Hulett. She graduated from Kentucky State University with a bachelor's degree in social work and a minor in gerontology. Nancy and Joe have four married children who have delighted them with 12 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren who are the highlight of their lives.

Nancy is a volunteer for Safe Place and the Sunshine Center. She is also a member of the Kentucky Citizen Foster Care Review Board. Nancy, Joe and their children attend Trinity Baptist Church in Lexington.



Nancy Hulett poses with Franklin County Family Court Judge Reed Rhorer at the completion of her requirements for the certified Public Management Fundamentals program.



Family Court in the News

Is your Family Court making news? If you think your Family Court is newsworthy, please contact Kelly Stephens at 800-928-2350 to request a news release. The AOC's Office of Public Information is responsible for preparing and distributing news releases for Family Court. If your news merits attention, Kelly will coordinate a news release with the AOC's public information officer who will distribute it to the appropriate media outlets.

AOC employees break all giving records to Kentucky Employees Charitable Campaign

The 2003 Kentucky Employees Charitable Campaign ended Oct. 30 with record-breaking donations from Judicial Branch employees. The Court of Justice campaign raised \$36,680, which exceeded last year's goal by 129 percent! The statewide campaign, which included every state agency, raised more than \$1,172,450.

Most donations were received through pledge sheets that were distributed to Court of Justice personnel across the state. KCOJ employees gave by selecting the amount of their donation and the charitable organization they wished to receive those funds. The six charities — Christian Appalachian Project, Community Health Project, Easter Seals, Prevent Child Abuse Kentucky, United Way Kentucky, and the WHAS Crusade for Children — represent more than 1,000 charitable programs across the Commonwealth.

In addition to the pledges, several fundraising events took place at the Administrative Office of the Courts in Frankfort. These events included a silent auction, cutest baby contest, dessert day bake sale, chili lunch, dress down days, and the first KECC Talent Show, a fun event that brought AOC employees together for a good cause. The talent show alone raised more than \$800 — not bad for one hour of the best singing, dancing and wisecracking ever witnessed at the AOC!

The Department of Alternative Dispute Resolution and the Department of Family Court coordinated the Court of



Then Revenue Cabinet Secretary Dana Mayton, left, presents Carol Paisley, manager of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Department, with the KECC Outstanding Achievement Award for the Judicial Branch's efforts during the 2003 KECC statewide fundraising campaign.

Justice KECC campaign. The members of these departments — Carol Paisley, Tracy Hughes, Carla Kreitman, Brenda Bingham, Kelly Stephens, Nancy Hulett and former employee Helen Morris — wish to thank everyone who donated their money, time and energy to the pledges and fundraising events that made the campaign such a success. Plans are already under way for next year's campaign, with plans to branch out with events across the state during the entire year!

Divorce education providers meet at Natural Bridge State Park

*By Kelly Stephens, J.D.
Family Court Specialist*

Nearly all of the facilitators and administrators of Divorce Education programs in the Commonwealth met in October to discuss funding and communication issues.

The program representatives traveled from more than 40 counties to the conference, which was hosted by the Department of Family Court and took place at Natural Bridge State Park. The gathering provided a rare opportunity for representatives of the four divorce education programs in the state — Families in Transition, Parents Education, Parents are for Good, and



Divorcing and Divorced Parents — to share their perspectives on facilitation techniques, funding and plans for the future.

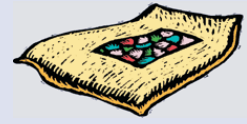
Communication and problem solving were major themes of the conference. The participants discussed how to maintain current and accurate information about all programs and staff, as well as how to collect evaluation data on the success of their programs.

The participants also formed several committees to support the needs of the divorce education providers. The committees will focus on developing evaluation tools for every program, maintaining a structure for communication among programs and planning future divorce education provider events. A continuing education symposium for providers is being considered for early next year.

For more information, contact Family Court Specialist Nancy Hulett at 800-928-2350.



Great Job!



East Carter High School students raise money for children in Carter County Family Court

We want to share some good news about a call Carter/Elliott/Morgan Family Court received from Beth Pennington, the assistant principal at East Carter High School. Ms. Pennington called to say that the students at East Carter High had raised money during their Red Ribbon Drive project for the children being served in Family Court.

They sold red ribbons for \$1 each, with all proceeds going to help provide Family Court

children with quilts and teddy bears. She wanted us to know they had raised \$406.

Today each child who is removed from his or her home due to neglect or abuse receives a quilt and a teddy bear. Wow! What a statement. Thank you, East Carter students, for doing such a wonderful thing. We appreciate your efforts.



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